



Indianapolis Gregory A. Ballard, Mayor
REBUILDINDY
Department of Public Works

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STREETSCAPE REVITALIZATION OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. STREET CORRIDOR HONORS CIVIL RIGHTS PIONEER, LOCAL LEGENDS

*Mayor Greg Ballard, Martin Luther King III are joined by community leaders in unveiling
infrastructure improvements at ribbon-cutting celebration*

INDIANAPOLIS – On the Near-Westside thoroughfare named for late civil and human rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Mayor Greg Ballard was joined by Dr. King's eldest son, Martin Luther King III, and local community leaders for a ribbon-cutting ceremony unveiling major infrastructure improvements and celebrating the opening of the revitalized streetscape.

"We are proud to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with this investment that demonstrates our recognition that this corridor must be honored not just in name but in action and that the residents who live and do business in this neighborhood deserve revitalization," said Mayor Ballard. "These changes will result in improved accessibility, enhanced quality of life for residents and a more attractive environment for businesses that aims to spur new economic development and stabilization."

In 2008 under Mayor Ballard's leadership, the City of Indianapolis began working with neighborhood leaders, stakeholders, organizations and residents to develop plans for a \$2.3 million investment in the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street corridor. The project reflects the neighborhood's rich African-American history by incorporating features into landmarks honoring Dr. King and legends of the local African-American community chosen through community-driven ballot offered at area businesses, social service agencies and churches.

Martin Luther King III, President and CEO of The King Center in Atlanta, Ga., praised the progress, Mayor Ballard's vision for the enhancements and their impact, as well as the civic-mindedness of the Indianapolis community, saying the investment will serve as a model for

other cities around the country interested in revitalizing their corridors named after the civil rights pioneer.

“I am pleased to see these improvements that focus not only on beautification but also on improving accessibility and fostering development, quality of life and success for the residents of this neighborhood,” King said. “Nearly every city and town in the United States honors the name of Martin Luther King Jr. with a street, but honoring his vision for equality and progress requires more than words – it requires initiative, effort and action like that of the City of Indianapolis for this project, and I hope it serves as an example for other communities to honor my father’s vision for the progress of the people in the same way they all recognize his name.”

The City resurfaced the street from Fall Creek Parkway to north of 30th Street and made sidewalk improvements, including adding curb ramps compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The City installed decorative crosswalks, five new bus shelters, pedestrian signal improvements, gateway towers at 30th Street, and infrastructure improvements including rain gardens and landscaped medians, on-street parking and traffic flow improvements.

Students attending nearby schools selected quotes from Dr. King’s speeches that were engraved in a series of transit stops along the street. The landmarks also feature posters and biographical information of such local legends and historical figures as retired journalist Barbara Boyd, artist William Ryder, cycling hero Marshall “Major” Taylor, Crispus Attucks basketball coach and teacher Ray Crowe, and auto-racing pioneer Charlie Wiggins.

The streetscape plans call for a second phase of improvements to the area of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street, which will be announced at a future date.

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